



**US Army Corps
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Jacksonville District

NEWS RELEASE

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P.O. Box 4970 Jacksonville, FL 32232-0019

Contact: Susan J. Jackson

Phone: (904) 232-1953 FAX: (904) 232-2237

Email: Susan.J.Jackson@usace.army.mil

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Corps of Engineers hosts meeting on 8.5 Square Mile Area Project

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District, is in the process of developing an interim water control plan for the **8.5 Square Mile Area Project**. The Corps will host a **public meeting Wednesday, Nov. 19**, to present the draft interim operating criteria and accompanying draft Environmental Assessment on the proposed operating criteria.

The meeting starts at 5 p.m. and a presentation on the draft interim operating criteria will begin promptly at **7 p.m. at the John D. Campbell Agricultural Center, 18710 SW 288th Street, Homestead**, Florida. Multiple information stations will be open and manned by agency personnel, including topic experts. Bilingual (Spanish/English) staff will also be available to assist attendees with translations, as needed.

The interim water control plan contains operating criteria for Pump Station S-357, which is a component of the Modified Water Deliveries to Everglades National Park Project, one of the foundation projects for the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan.

The Corps welcomes the public's views, comments and information about the environmental assessment and interim operating criteria. The comment period ends **Dec. 8**, 2008.

Public comments may be submitted by mail:

Susan Conner
Planning Division, Environmental Branch
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
701 San Marco Blvd.
Jacksonville, FL 32207-8175

Comments may also be submitted by e-mail: CSCFComments@evergladesplan.org



The draft documents are posted at www.saj.usace.army.mil under "Hot Topics". For more information, please visit this web site and www.Evergladesplan.org or call the Jacksonville District Corporate Communications Office at 904-232-1004.

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Editors, please see the below information for more details on the interim operating criteria.

**Summary of Proposed Interim Operating Criteria
for the 8.5 Square Mile Area Project**

The 8.5 Square Mile Area Project component is the result of the Modified Water Deliveries to Everglades National Park, 8.5 Square Mile Area General Reevaluation Report and Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (July 2000). One of the other components of the Modified Water Deliveries to Everglades National Park Project is the future Tamiami Trail Modifications component that will eventually provide increased water from Water Conservation Area 3 to Northeast Shark River Slough. The 8.5 Square Mile Area features are designed to mitigate for the increased flood risk associated with these planned increased water levels in Northeast Shark River Slough due to future Tamiami Trail modifications.

Main Features of the 8.5 Square Mile Area Project

An exterior levee (L-357W), between Northeast Shark River Slough and the 8.5 Square Mile Area (SMA) acts as a barrier between 8.5 SMA Project area residents and Everglades National Park. A seepage collection canal (C-357), between L-357W and L-31N is intended to maintain surface and groundwater levels between these two levees. A pump station (S-357), at the most southern point of C-357, pumps seepage water (collected and drawn into C-357) from C-357 into a detention cell which is contained by the L-359 levees. The S-357 pump capacity is 575 cubic feet per second (cfs) and consists of four diesel pumps (125 cfs each) and one electric pump (75 cfs).

8.5 Square Mile Area Project Proposed Interim Operating Criteria

The water management operating criteria proposed are interim and are subject to change prior to completion of the ongoing long-term construction of the MWD Project and the C-111 Project. The 8.5 SMA Project features will work in conjunction with the existing S-331 pump station, which is the flood control structure for the immediate area.

The objective of the proposed operating criteria is to maintain the surface and groundwater levels between L-357W and L-31N (within the 8.5 SMA) at the same levels expected prior to the implementation of any MWD Project components, while preserving hydro-periods near the 8.5 SMA. S-357 pumping operations will be based on C-357 water levels at the Las Palmas gage and the G-3273 gage (located in Everglades National Park). The G-3273 gage defines "wet and dry" conditions as greater than or less than 6.8 feet, National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929 (NGVD). Under both "wet and dry" conditions, S-357 will not pump more than 500 acre-feet per day. The S-357 pumps will be turned off to prevent overflow of the detention cell. This is a summary of the interim operating criteria:

During "wet" conditions, S-357 may be operated up to 500 acre-feet per day to maintain C-357 at the Las Palmas gage between 5.2 and 4.9 feet, NGVD. The pump(s) will be off when the Las Palmas gage is less than 4.9 feet, NGVD.

During "dry" conditions, S-357 may be operated up to 500 acre-feet per day to maintain C-357 at the Las Palmas gage between 5.7 and 5.4 feet, NGVD. The pump(s) will be off when the Las Palmas gage is less than 5.4 feet, NGVD.